FAMILY LIFE

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Vol. XVIII, No. 7 JULY, 1958 Edited by Paul Popenoe

Educating The Newlyweds

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There is now a backlog of research data which gives us some notion of where we are and trends we can anticipate with respect to marriage and family stability. We can, for example, anticipate a downward trend in family instability. The reason for this anticipation lies in the fact that family instability has been found to be related to education, being relatively less likely to occur among those with more education. As an increasing proportion of the population completes high school and goes on to college there should be a decreasing proportion of unstable marriages. A partial brake on this tendency, however, is the tendency for urban families to be less stable than rural ones, and urbanization can be expected to continue. But much of the movement of population is now to the suburbs where, apparently family life tends to be stable, so that even this counterforce may not be strong.

We cannot, however, merely sit and wait for major sociological forces to exert their impact. There will remain for a long time a considerable segment of the population vulnerable to breakdown and some break-through must be made with respect to the problem of protecting them.

Social action often finds itself confronted with the vicious-circle paradox. Where does one break through? Existing statistical data justify the conclusion that a program to prevent divorce or separation would economize its resources if it concentrated on marriages of persons below the average age at marriage, of relatively little education, and among non-whites. These are the groups in which break-ups are most frequent. This is still a broad field, and it is proposed that the program be geared to include all those marriages in which the brides were under the median age at marriage.

The program will be presented under four headings, namely: (1) techniques for reaching the newly-married; (2) personnel involved in implementing the plan; (3) specific program elements included in it; and (4) sponsorship and/or administration.

Techniques.

1. Social workers may recoil at the suggestion that newly married couples

FAMILY LIFE
Monthly service bulletin of the
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF
FAMILY RELATIONS
5287 Sunset Boulevard
Los Angeles 27, California
Price $1 a year, 10c a copy.

be approached by a Welcome Wagon. And this on two counts. First, it ties in with an advertising gimmick; second, it seems to violate one of the most basic canons of social work.

But after the first shock of novelty has worn off, there seems no justifiable objection to using a culture trait that industry has found so successful. Americans have accepted the paid-for aggression of advertisers. It is far less repulsive to them than friendly do-gooding would be. There is, further, the important fact that industry has a large stake in family stability. It should certainly be permitted to contribute in any program for stabilizing families. The Welcome Wagon would come bearing gifts. It would facilitate entree into the new family.

The second, and perhaps more basic, objection that social workers will raise with respect to the Welcome Wagon approach is that it is a form of buying an entree into a home, that, in effect, it offers help before help is asked for. Almost any preventive program will be subject to this criticism. But it is important to point out that although the "hostess" makes contact with the young people she in no way coerces them into anything.

The function of the "hostess" would be primarily to welcome the young people into the world of married couples. She would convey friendly interest. She would emphasize the couple's unity. She would be concerned but not inquisitive. She would do no research. She would make no diagnoses. And yet, as in the case of the Welcome Wagon, much of the success of the program would depend on her. This leads to the problem of personnel. Where could "hostesses" be found? Who should they be?

(2) *Personnel.* A program that involved making contacts with even half of all the newly married couples in any community (those married under the median age) would make staggering demands on personnel. Keeping in touch with the young couples for a year or two would vastly increase the demands. If the personnel had to be recruited from the ranks of social workers, the whole plan would obviously collapse. But social workers would not be required as "hostesses." Indeed, brides of two or three years would probably be better for the actual contact work than anyone else, on the theory that those who are near to problems they have themselves recently mastered are better teachers than those removed from them.

(3) *Specific Program Elements.* All the resources of the community would have to be made available to the young couples. Here the services of a competent community organizer would certainly be required to coordinate them.

For some couples little more than *adult education* would be involved. They would need relatively superficial help of a technological or informational nature. Parent education catches family members after the children are born. Bride education with respect to such technological aspects of homemaking as cooking is not unknown. Classes for young people in budgeting offer no problem. Classes for pregnant women

are no longer a novelty.

Some of the couples would be headed toward divorce of the second type referred to above, the kind resulting from lack of marital aptitude. Here *counseling* would certainly be required as a minimum treatment resource. We now have facilities in many communities for premarital counseling on a high level of competence. Counseling for families on the edge of dissolution is also available. Neo-marital counseling would fill in the gap between them. With the backlog of experience available from premarital and marital counseling, it should not be difficult to work out the special problems involved in neo-marital counseling. Here again the question of personnel might well be raised: where are the counselors to come from? The experience of England suggests that a great deal can be done by properly selected, briefed, and supervised volunteers.

(4) *Sponsoring Agency.* Since so many types of services are proposed here, the danger is that no one kind of agency will feel truly involved. Adult educationists will not feel such a program to be their responsibility. Counseling agencies will find it outside their traditional domain. Therapists and other specialists will also. Government certainly has a large role to perform in any program for stabilizing the family, but administering the program here proposed is not part of it.

For some of the young couples the ideal administering organization would be the church. The pattern illustrated in the Cana Conference which the Catholic Church has been evolving has much to recommend it. Inter-denominational Protestant experiments are also possible. Rabbis have also been working out plans that dovetail with the kind of thing here proposed.

For many of the young couples, however — let's face it — the church would not be the most acceptable sponsoring unit. For some the Urban League might be a suitable unit; for some, a community center. For some the private family agency. Just how the work would be divided would be a subtle problem in community organization.

Example. Every week, two weeks, month, or two months, according to the size of the community, some one would list from the records all the marriages in which the bride was below the median age of marriage. The names of those who had been married by a clergyman would, let us say, be sent to the appropriate church representative. The names of those who had no church affiliation would be sent to secular organizations such, for example, as the Urban League or a local family agency or some other suitable sponsoring unit. The representative in charge would then sort out the marriages on the basis of parental residence, as the most available index of class. Hostesses, hosts, or host-couples of the same general class background would then be assigned the responsibility of visiting each of the couples with a Welcome Wagon and inviting them to attend a meeting or party or conference—or whatever else it might be called in any specific setting—either in a home or in some other pleasant and agreeable place. At this meeting organizational plans could be made. It wouldn't make too much difference what the specific plans were, provided the young couples

were interested. Presumably at the early meetings there would be few problems in evidence, certainly not the deep-seated ones. The group might wish to begin with role-playing or group education or group counseling. As time passed, however, the several types of marital instability would begin to differentiate themselves. Couples would begin to drop out. One partner might come but not the other. Skilled personnel would be prepared to pick up any symptoms before they had had time to become serious. Professional help would be made available at the earliest possible moment.

It would be essential that every single neo-marital couple be reached in such a program. In a program of classes for expectant parents it was found that about 17 per cent attended; about twice as many upper class mothers attended as lower class mothers. There are no research findings to suggest how many young couples would be interested in participating in the kind of program here proposed. Refusal to participate might mean only that the young couple were self-sufficient. It might, in some cases however, mean that these young people were vulnerable. Contact would be maintained with young couples whether or not they were participating in groups.

This, then, baldly sketched is a possible social invention designed to head off marital instability before it has had a chance to harden. The precise blueprints for such an invention would have to be drawn up to the specifications of individual communities and they might vary from one to another. But the fundamental goal would be the same, namely to perform a function not now being performed.

(Abstract of an address given at the National Conference of Social Work. Chicago, May 14, 1958. Dr. Bernard will welcome comments, which should be addressed to her directly.)

Educational Notes

FAMILY LIFE WORKSHOP, directed by Judson T. Landis, is offered at the University of Alaska during the week of August 4. Directed to parents, teachers, counselors, and social workers, it carries college credit and offers low cost housing. Program may be obtained from Lydia Fohn-Hansen, associate director for Home Demonstration Work, College, Alaska.

NEWSLETTER of Parent Cooperative PreSchools of America is now available to the general public for $2 a year. Edited by Dr. Katherine Whiteside Taylor, it is published quarterly from 2418 St. Paul St., Baltimore 18, Md. Current (April, 1958) issue contains notes from an address by Dr. Lois Meek Stolz of Stanford University on the demonstrated value of nursery schools. Dr. Stolz admitted that her viewpoint on teacher qualifications had changed somewhat. Previously she had felt that good training and thorough study in child development were of primary importance, but although she still recognizes that these are indeed helpful in a better understanding of children, she now believes that the qualities of the person herself are the most essential, such as her ability to be flexible and to respect the individual's need to develop. She should feel secure enough not to feel threatened by undesirable behavior, nor to need children to be passive and dependent.

LA LECHE LEAGUE is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization in Chicago which takes its name from the Spanish

title of the mother of Jesus, "Nuestra Senora de la Leche y Buen Parto," i. e., Our Lady of Plentiful Milk and Happy Delivery. Its purpose is to help mothers give and enjoy giving happiness and security to their babies through breast-feeding, and it holds regular meetings for expectant mothers and in some instances for their husbands as well. It maintains a selected library and an information service. Further information may be had from Mrs. John Froelich, 3332 Rose st., Franklin Park, Ill.

Around the World

GENOA, ITALY, is one of the most recent cities to establish a marriage counseling service. President of the organizing committee is Dr. Piras, who is also first president of the Court of Appeals.

Research Notes

PEOPLE AGED 65 and over in the U.S.A. increased in number by 6,400,000 or 60% between the census of 1940 and mid-1956. The population of Senior Citizens in California doubled in that period. In Arizona it almost tripled and in Florida it actually did triple. *(Statistical Bulletin,* Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., March, 1958.)

OF ALL Western nations, the United States has the highest proportion of wives among its women workers. More than one-half of the working women are married, according to a newly-published study of the International Labor Office, which is associated with the United Nations.

ONE BABY of every thousand born has undifferentiated or ambiguous genitalia, so that the obstetrician can not answer the first question, "Is it a boy or a girl?" E. C. Hamblen suggests that an assignment should be made as early as possible and the infant reared accordingly; consistency in this respect is more important than some of the biological differences. If an attempt is made after the age of 2½ years, to change the assignment of the child, psychosexual problems are likely to develop. (*Amrican Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology,* Dec., 1957.)

FARM LABORERS have a lower marriage rate than any other occupational group. They tend to leave the farm and go into other occupations when they marry, so that even among those over age 45, only four-fifths have ever been married. (*Statistical Bulletin,* Metropolitan Life Ins. Co., Jan., 1958.)

ENURESIS is an inherited disability in some cases, says Bertil Hallgren, after studying 402 children who lacked bladder control. Other children are certainly influenced by emotional difficulties, he agrees, but there seems to a hard core of young patients among whom nocturnal enuresis is primarily "genetically determined." His findings are published in a monograph entitled *Enuresis: a clinical and genetic study;* Ejnar Munksgaard, Copenhagen, 1957, pp. 159.

CHILDREN from large families do not make any better personal adjustments than children from small families, in the opinion of Glenn R. Hawkes and associates, who studied 256 fifth-grade children with a test which Carl R. Rogers devised more than a quarter of a century ago. Several studies by other investigators have given diverse results. (*Marriage and Family Living,* Feb., 1958.)

HAPPIER HOME LIFE, as seen by older adolescents in unbroken homes, "comes when parents are happy with

each other, reasonably well educated, have income that is perceived as adequate for family needs, rule with a light hand, and are able to communicate to their children an appreciation for them as developing personalities who have the ability to make their own decisions." This is the conclusion of Walter L. Slocum, who studied nearly 2,000 boys and girls, seniors in 35 high schools in the state of Washington. The data are published in *The Coordinator,* March, 1958.

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NEW SPEED RECORD is claimed by a young Canadian husband who started divorce proceedings on his wedding day. According to Montreal newspaper accounts, immediately after the wedding ceremony his bride blurted out the fact that she was pregnant by another man. The husband immediately stepped to the telephone and notified his lawyer to begin divorce proceedings.

IN PARIS Roman Catholic Cardinal Feltin has called attention to rapid increase of divorces, now reaching the proportion of 20% of marriages—a figure not very far below that of the United States at a whole. He states that mental health problems are five times more common among the children whose parents have separated, than among children from intact homes. Cardinal Feltin is Archbishop of Paris.

WIDOWS with small children, who are obligated to work to support the family should get special help including priority of employment, the International Union of Family Organizations declared at its meeting in Rome, Sept. 1957. It held that insurance and other social measures (not charity) should be sufficient to enable them to stay at home with their children, however, instead of being forced out to work. "A widow," the report observed, "is profoundly affected by her husband's death, by her moral loneliness, by the worries she can no longer share, and the moral difficulties with which she is unceasingly confronted. Her health is often affected by her increased difficulties and fatigue . . . Hitherto these problems have not been sufficiently studied. This should be done so as to give fatherless families not only the material aid they need, but also the moral and psychological support which is no less necessary."

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EXPLAINING LIFE, by A. O. Dart, pp. 15, price 15c from Review and Herald Publishing Assn., Washington 12, D.C., together with eleven other pamphlets at the same price, prepared for the dept. of education of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, but widely usable by parents. Each one includes a self-scoring test. They include such topics as TEACHING HONESTY, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, and WHOLESOME ATTITUDES ABOUT LIFE.

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NEW FRONTIERS IN CHILD GUIDANCE, ed. by Aaron H. Esman. Pp. 218, price $4 from International Universities Press, 227 W. 13th st., New York 11, N.Y., 1958.

Nine technical papers by staff members of the Jewish Board of Guardians in New York City, published as a memorial to Dr. Johan H. W. Van Ophuijsen, the eminent Dutch psychoanalyst who was chief psychiatrist of the Board of Guardians from 1935 until his death. The authors present many interesting ideas, among them being the use of two therapists, a man and a woman, alternately.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

ONE MIND, COMMON TO ALL, by Earl D. Bond. Pp. 220 (no index,) price $4.50 from the Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth ave., New York 11, N.Y., 1958.

In this pleasantly-written book one of the deans of psychiatry on this continent sets down his philosophy of life with abundant illustrations of the vagaries of human nature, in history, in literature, and in daily communication. He emphasizes the fact that the abnormal and the normal are not set apart by any sharp division. Rather, all people are ranged in line, with the very superior at one end, the completely disorganized at the other, and most of us strung along somewhere in the middle. He discusses the principle of emotional maturity, so important to civilization. People have a natural tendency to grow up; but they also have a natural tendency to "grow down," in search of ease, of freedom from responsibility. Civilization has to deal with the balance between these two tendencies. Obviously, stimulus is necessary to keep one going. "A satisfied person is hopeless; men and women, with all their resemblances, are better off to keep those endearing, interesting, unreasoning little differences and anxieties that make each of them an individual in his own right. Deliver us from easy contentment, from uniformity and someone else's ideas of perfection! Over and over let us admit that a little neurosis is needed for mental health." Any thoughtful reader will enjoy and profit from this book.

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THE 9-MONTHS' WONDER, by Peg Braken and Helen Berry Moore. Pp. 90, price $2.95 from Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1958.

Entertaining and sensible discussion of pregnancy and childbirth, with many drawings.

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ALL THE TIME YOU NEED, by Robert R. Updegraff. Pp. 413, price $4.95 from Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1958.

"Success book" based on establishing efficient living and working habits — readable and practical. The author is described as an adviser to leading corporations.

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HOW TO STOP DRINKING, by Herbert Brean. Pp. 182 (no index,) price $2.95 from Henry Holt & Co., 383 Madison ave., New York 17, N.Y., 1958.

Good advice from a popular journalist who is the author of eight other books including *How to stop smoking.*

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MAKE YOUR INCOME COUNT, by Donald I. Rogers. Pp. 217, price $3.95 from Henry Holt & Co., 383 Madison ave., New York 17, N.Y., 1958.

Enlightening discussion of finance for everybody, by a journalist who wrote the useful book, *Teach your wife to be a widow.*

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ALL ABOUT MEN, by Joseph H. Peck. Pp. 260 (no index,) price $3.50 from Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1958.

Publicity given to this book by eager reviewers and magazine and newspaper editors probably reflects the great rarity of any writing on the psychology of the male sex, as contrasted with

the abundance of such material on "the Eternal Feminine." Dr. Peck is a country physician in Utah, now retired from active practice. He might be described in the words James Whitcomb Riley applied to an old time newspaper columnist, Abe Martin: "a comical sort of a mixture of hoss sense and no sense at all." He throws in plenty of sex vulgarity to attract a certain type of reader, but has no actual information that hasn't been presented plenty of times before. The general verdict on the book will have to be "Matter of taste."

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SECRETS OF SELF-MASTERY, by Lowell Russell Ditzen. Pp. 169 (no index,) price $3.50 from Henry Holt & Co., 383 Madison ave., New York 17, N.Y., 1958.

Dr. Ditzen is minister of the Reformed Church, Bronxville, N.Y., and author of other inspirational books as well as radio programs. The book offers easy and profitable reading.

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THE ROAD TO SUCCESSFUL LIVING, by Louis Binstock. Pp. 307 (no index,) price $3.95 from Simon & Schuster, 630 Fifth ave., New York 20, N.Y., 1958.

Most of us go through life without drawing on even a small fraction of the happiness within our reach, says Dr. Binstock, and he discusses in detail the ways of getting on the right track, eliminating the fear of failure, and drawing on our inner resources. He is rabbi of Temple Sholom, Chicago, and a prominent public lecturer and community worker.

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ANALYZING PSYCHOTHERAPY, by Solomon Katzenelbogen. Pp. 126, price $3 from Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th st., New York, N.Y., 1958.

Psychoanalysis is no better than any other kind of psychotherapy, says psychiatrist Katzenelbogen in a little book written to give the public an idea of what the treatment of emotional difficulties involves. He is disdainful of the analysis which every analyst is expected to undergo in order to get rid of his own difficulties—he simply doesn't get rid of them! Childhood experiences are important in the patient's make-up, but the experiences of later life are also important. "Suggestion, encouragement, advice, persuation, *judiciously used* are potent and, to my mind, constant and indispensable parts of any psychotherapy," he declares. "The theory of insight as the main, if not the only, architect of a successful treatment has not been borne out in practice." Dr. Katzenelbogen has been professor of psychiatry at George Washington University and director of laboratory and research at St. Elizabeth's hospital. His common sense and freedom from dogma are refreshing.

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BEYOND FREUD, by Camilla M. Anderson. Pp. 282, price $4 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33d st., New York 16, N.Y., 1957.

After a discussion of various forms of emotional illness and their supposed causes, Dr. Anderson takes up psychotherapy, looking on analytical therapy as the ideal. She pays no attention to the surveys that cast doubt on its effectiveness. She lays great stress on the evil done by "moral judgment." "Are we then to have no moral judgments? Are we not to account *anything* as right or wrong? The answer to this is that only God knows." Many readers would think that this throws Dr. Anderson back into the "moral nihi-

lism" which characterized many Freudians, and which is now so widely repudiated. She goes on to explain that a study of consequences of acts is necessary, so that "this seems more right—or wrong— (functional or nonfunctional) than something else." But she, insists, "when we have approached it in this fashion, it no longer is moral judgment; it has moved into the realm of critical conceptual judgment or critical evaluation or realistic appraisal." The process of psychotherapy that she presents "is the process of gaining insight into the fact that it is moral judgment in some form which stands in the way of growth . . . in other words, with the good life." Such a view will seem to many persons a very narrow one, ignoring much of what they consider effective psychotherapy. Dr. Anderson is assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of Utah School of Medicine, Salt Lake City.

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DYNAMICS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY, Vol. III, The Psychology of Personality Change, by Percival M. Symonds. Pp. 241, price $6.50 from Grune & Stratton, 381 Fourth ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

This third volume concludes Dr. Symonds' comprehensive treatise on psychotherapy and offers particularly practical help to anyone concerned with the re-education of people in difficulties. He deals with interpretation, reassurance and support, suggestion and persuasion, and advice giving, all in a simple and easily-understandable way with abundant reference to the great amount of research (good or bad) in the field. Reassurance should be used sparingly, mainly with weak clients; but silence may itself be anxiety-arousing. Suggestion, long condemned by the analytic school, is in fact inseparable from all real counseling. Suggestion is not dependent on words,—it can be conveyed in all sorts of ways. Advice and information should be given when and where needed. "The essence of psychotherapy is what the patient can be encouraged to say, to do, to feel, and to think."

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CAN PEOPLE LEARN TO LEARN? by Brock Chisholm. Pp. 143 (no index,) price $3 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33d st., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Education to help people understand each other, with a view to living at peace in the world, is the thesis of Dr. Chisholm, distinguished Canadian psychiatrist who has been director general of the World Health Organization. There are plenty of obstacles to be overcome in reaching this indispensable goal and if he has not succeeded in showing how they can all be removed easily, it's because the job is not an easy one! He will at least make the reader think; and many people have been quite unwilling to think on this subject.

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FAMILY-CENTERED MATERNITY NURSING, by Ernestine Wiedenbach. Pp. 345, price $5.50 from G. P. Putnam's Sons, 210 Madison ave., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Text-book for students of obstetrical nursing; but its contents are of great importance to American families, which are now demanding many changes in the management of childbirth and early maternity. The author is associate professor at the Yale University School of Nursing.

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SINS OF THEIR FATHERS, by Marjorie Rittwagen. Pp. 264, price $3.50

from Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park st., Boston 7, Mass., 1958.

Dr. Rittwagen, staff psychiatrist for New York City Children's Courts, paints a vivid and grim picture of "miserable, weak, fearful, inadequate, drifting children—without roots, without beliefs, without interests, without ambition. 'Empty' kids leading empty lives. It was that quality of 'emptiness,' the 'nothingness' to many of these children, that shocked me most." There are many different causes contributing to the delinquency of these children, but most of the causes are associated in one way or another with their parents. As there are many causes, so there are many cures — no panacea, unfortunately. They must be reached, studied, helped, one by one; and it can be done if society wants to make the effort and spend the money necessary. This is a strong, enlightening, stirring, and persuasive book that ought to have a million readers.

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FAMILY FUN AND ACTIVITIES, by Margaret E. Mulac. Pp. 261, price $3.95 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33d st., New York 16, N.Y., 1958.

Here is a book which any family might well add to its library, and use daily. Miss Mulac is president of the Recreational Consultant Service, Cleveland, Ohio, and knows what she is writing about. The comprehensive discussion is illustrated with many appropriate sketches.

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TODAY'S NEUROTIC FAMILY, by Harry F. Tashman. Pp. 214, price $3.95 from New York University Press, Washington Square, New York 3, N.Y., 1957.

In this "journey into psychoanalysis" the author's recurrent theme is that "a neurosis marries a neurosis, and a family marries a family." The latter part of the statement will be generally accepted, but statistical evidence on the first part is scanty. In his own practice Dr. Tashman finds that one or more commonly both of the parents of every patient are so disturbed, so starved at their beginnings, that they have been unable to give their child the love and support necessary for his wellbeing. He describes his analytic standpoint as half-way between the Freudian and the cultural schools of thought, but some readers will feel that a sociological point of view might well be emphasized more fully. Dr. Tashman, who is on the psychiatric faculty of New York University-Bellevue Medical Center, writes interestingly and doubtless expects controversy.

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HANDBOOK FOR DATING, by Cecil Jane Richmond. Pp. 61, price $2 from the Westminister Press, Witherspoon bldg., Philadelphia 7, Pa., 1958.

Written for girls of ages 12 to 15, this little book is specific and practical, — it compares favorably with many books on the subject that are much larger. Mrs. Richmond is an Ohio newspaper woman who has two grown sons.

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NATURAL SELECTION IN MAN, arranged by J. N. Spuhler. Pp. 80 (no index), price $3.50 from Wayne State University Press, Detroit 2, Mich., 1958.

Four papers by specialists, originally presented at a conference at the University of Michigan. They contain much valuable material for the geneticist or anthropologist, but will have little appeal to the general reader.

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